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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 000650

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SUBJECT: THE IRAQI FPS - A MISSING SECURITY LINK?

¶1. SUMMARY: Prior to the fall of Saddam's regime, the Facility Protection Services (FPS) was directly controlled by the Ministry of Interior (MoI) but was decentralized during the CPA's administration. The MoI has recently introduced a FPS Reform Law that is considered critical in guaranteeing control of such a massive security apparatus. On March 4, former Deputy Prime Minister Zoubai's staff hosted a meeting that has renewed efforts to reconsolidate FPS oversight and actively seek the Reform Law's passage within the Council of Representatives (CoR). END SUMMARY.

Background and History

¶2. Prior to the fall of Saddam's regime, the Facility Protection Services (FPS) was directly controlled by the Ministry of Interior (MoI). Issued in September 2003, CPA Order #27 decentralized the bureau and transferred personnel to ministries who independently supervised their own forces. The initiative quickly proved to be problematic without standardized training, inconsistent salaries and benefits, weak leadership, and an acute susceptibility to militia influence.

¶3. In a vain attempt to reclaim national oversight, the Prime Minister issued an Executive Order in December 2006 that was inadequate and did not explicitly delineate resources or authority.

¶4. The MoI recently introduced a FPS Reform Law that is considered critical in guaranteeing control of such a massive security apparatus. The legislation would consolidate authority under the MoI, deny militia infiltration, stymie corruption, implement standardized vetting and training procedures, and increase confidence and public trust in the GoI. The law lies dormant within the Council of Ministers.

FPS Reinvigoration Meeting

¶5. On March 4, ITAO's suggested inter-agency meeting was convened in an effort to reinvigorate FPS reformation. Former Deputy Prime Minister Zoubai's Chief of Staff, Dr. Khalid, hosted the meeting which notably included Vice President Hashimi's Advisor, Ahmed Hamed; Director General of FPS, MG Fadhil; and Iraqi Army representative MG Ali. The USG was represented by MNSTC-I and ITAO respectively.

¶6. MG Fadhil provided attendees an overview of current concerns and proposed initiatives in order to reform the FPS. He mentioned that he had conducted a detailed census of current personnel, and reported nearly 120,000 members divided among several ministries and 14 provinces. MG Fadhil described the FPS Reform Law, including the administration of salaries and intended command structure. He concluded by noting that current FPS members support reconsolidation under MoI.

¶7. MG Ali argued that FPS are key to Iraq's security, not

simply because of their ability to protect infrastructure, but their unique position to collect intelligence. He also explained that the Reform Law provided a mechanism to fracture militia influence by retraining and reassigning personnel. MG Ali emphasized that loyalties should be strictly to Iraq, and not aligned with political parties or sectarian groups.

¶18. Attendees engaged in a thorough discussion, analyzing specific details of the Reform Law and proposing solutions to potential political opposition. They reviewed physical and academic requirements, and even paid attention to details such as grooming and uniform standards. (NOTE: Consideration to such precise elements of the Reform Law demonstrate analysis and forethought of Iraqi participants on this issue. END NOTE)

Infrastructure and CLC Support

¶19. Dr. Khalid anticipated that increased energy sector investments would lead to the construction of new facilities and would require additional security personnel. He added that the GoI "can't offer services without protection of linear infrastructure." Retired MoI colonel, Abdul Sattar, also claimed that transportation resources, particularly rails and ports, should especially utilize reformed FPS.

¶10. Attendees hoped that FPS would be a natural destination for Concerned Local Citizens (CLC), but recognized the Reform Law would first need to be approved by the CoR. Dr. Khalid believed employment within FPS would be vital to ensuring a sense of pride amongst Iraqis.

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Way Forward?

¶11. COMMENT: A sense of unity and enthusiasm was discernable amongst attendees. They agreed to conduct one final review of the Reform Law and would then present to DPM Zoubai and VP Hashimi to jointly champion through the CoR. MNSTC-I and ITAO representatives will promote a follow-up meeting in two weeks in order to identify a unanimous way forward. END COMMENT.
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